

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 22, 2009, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 1-11, 13-23 and 26 were previously pending in this application. Claims 1, 15 and 26 are amended herein. As a result, claims 1-11, 13-23 and 26 remain pending for examination with claims 1, 15 and 26 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Summary of Telephone Interview

Applicants' representatives Edmund J. Walsh and Ling Cheung Hughes thank Examiner Pesin for the courtesies extended in granting and conducting the telephone interview held on March 17, 2010. During the interview, Applicants' representatives discussed with the Examiner illustrative embodiments of the present disclosure and explained why the claims are believed to distinguish over the cited references. The Examiner agreed to reconsider the cited references in view of the claim amendments presented herein. Details of the discussion are further summarized herein below.

Overview of Embodiments

As discussed during the telephone interview, aspects of the present disclosure relates to a user interface framework that can be used to build componentized user interfaces for one or more computer applications or hosting environments. Paragraphs 0028, 0033-0034. In some embodiments, the framework is configured to load various interface plug-ins and to enable a user to interact with the computer applications or hosting environments using the interface elements provided by the plug-ins. Paragraphs 0029, 0033-0034.

In some embodiments, to enable the use of a plug-in in a computer application or hosting environment, an application specific adapter may be used to map interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the computer application or hosting environment. Paragraph 0034. For example, if the plug-in provides a toolbar button and the user clicks on the toolbar button, the adapter signals to the computer application that a particular function should be performed.

In some further embodiments, a shell adapter may be used as an interface between the user interface framework and the various application specific adapters. FIG. 4 and paragraph 0033. In this manner, the plug-ins may be used in different computer applications or hosting environments with minimal coding changes. Paragraph 0033.

The foregoing overview is provided to assist the Examiner in appreciating some applications for various inventive aspects of the present disclosure. However, this overview may not apply to each of the independent claims, and the language of the independent claims may differ in material respects from the summary provided above. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that careful consideration be given to the language of each of the independent claims and that each be addressed on its own merits, without relying on the overview provided above. In this respect, Applicants not rely on the overview provided above to distinguish any of the claims over the prior art. Rather, Applicants rely only upon the language of the claims themselves and the arguments related specifically thereto.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects independent claims 1 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly being obvious over Ezekial (U.S. Patent No. 5,625,783) in view of Sheard (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,345). The Office Action further rejects independent claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly being obvious over Ezekial and Sheard in view of Shank ("Microsoft Office 2000/Visual Basic: Programmer's Guide," April 1999). Although Applicants believe the claims as previously presented distinguished over the cited references, Applicants have herein amended each of the independent claim for the sole purpose of advancing prosecution. In view of these amendments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration.

I. Claim 1

As amended, claim 1 recites, "a first application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the first plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications, such that, in

response to a user activating an interface element provided by the first plug-in, the first application specific adapter causes a computer application of the one or more computer applications to perform a function corresponding to the interface element.” Neither of the cited references teaches or suggests these limitations.

At page 3, the Office Action acknowledges that Ezekiel does not teach or suggest an “application specific adaptor,” as claimed. However, the Office Action alleges that Sheard shows such an “application specific adaptor” at FIG. 3. Applicants respectfully disagree.

As explained during the telephone interview, Sheard relates to a data transport framework having a technology-independent integration mechanism that facilitates the exchange of technology-dependent data between disparate applications. Abstract, column 1, lines 24-29. The transport mechanism includes a number of adapters associated with a corresponding number of applications. FIG. 4, column 3, lines 52-53. Each adapter is customized to interface with a corresponding application and transforms data being transferred between the application and the data exchange infrastructure. Column 3, lines 54-56. Particularly, data produced by a particular application is converted from a technology dependent form to a technology-independent form by the corresponding adapter. Column 3, lines 56-59, column 10, lines 9-22.

In summary, the adapters described in Sheard merely convert data from one format to another, so that the data can be more easily shared between different applications. Therefore, the adapters of Sheard do not “map[] **interface elements** of the first plug-in to **functions** of the one or more computer applications,” as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added). As such, the adapters of Sheard also fail to meet the limitation, “in response to a user activating an interface element provided by the first plug-in, the first application specific adapter causes a computer application of the one or more computer applications to perform a function corresponding to the interface element,” as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-11 and 13-14 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

II. Claim 15

As amended, claim 15 recites, “an application specific adapter that maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the one or more computer applications, such that, in response to a user activating an interface element provided by the plug-in, the application specific adapter causes a computer application of the one or more computer applications to perform a function corresponding to the interface element.” For reasons that should be clear from the foregoing discussion of Ezekiel and Sheard, the cited references, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest this limitation. Therefore, claim 15 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 15 be withdrawn.

Claims 16-23 depend from claim 15 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

III. Claim 26

As amended, claim 26 recites,

“providing a first interface between the plug-in and a first computer application or hosting environment, wherein the first interface maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the first computer application or hosting environment;

in response to a user activating a first instance of an interface element provided by the plug-in, causing, at least in part by the first interface, the first computer application or hosting environment to perform a first function, wherein the first interface maps the interface element to the first function;

providing a second interface between the plug-in and a second computer application or hosting environment, wherein the second interface maps interface elements of the plug-in to functions of the second computer application or hosting environment;

in response to the user activating a second instance of the interface element provided by the plug-in, causing, at least in part by the second interface, the second computer application or hosting environment to perform a second function, wherein the second interface maps the interface element to the second function.”

The amendments to claim 26 are supported throughout the original disclosure, for example, at paragraphs 33-34 and 42. Particularly, paragraphs 33-34 state that multiple computer applications or hosting environments can utilize the same plug-ins, and paragraph 42 makes it clear that, when multiple applications or hosting environments make use of the same plug in, at least one instance of the plug-in is created for each of the applications or hosting environments.

For reasons that should be clear from the foregoing discussion of Ezekiel and Sheard, the cited references, even if combined, fail to teach or suggest the above limitations of claim 26. Therefore, claim 26 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the references, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 26 be withdrawn.

Furthermore, claim 26 requires that the same “plug-in” be utilized by **both** the “first computer application or hosting environment” and the “second computer application or hosting environment,” and that the same “interface element provided by the plug-in” correspond to **both** the “first function” of the “first computer application or hosting environment” and the “second function” of the “second computer application or hosting environment.” These correspondences are created, respectively, via the “first interface” and the “second interface,” as claimed. That is, “the first interface maps the interface element to the first function,” and “the second interface maps the interface element to the second function,” as recited in claim 26.

Thus, claim 26 recites a specific arrangement in which two different computer applications or hosting environments utilize the same plug-in. Such an arrangement is absent in any of the cited references. For at least this additional reason, claim 26 patentably distinguishes over the alleged combination of the references.

General Comments on Dependent Claims

Because each of the dependent claims depends from a base claim that is believed to be in condition for allowance, Applicants believe that it is unnecessary at this time to argue the further distinguishing features of all of the dependent claims. However, Applicants do not necessarily concur with the interpretation of the dependent claims as set forth in the Office Action, nor do Applicants concur that the basis for the rejection of any of the dependent claims is proper. Therefore, Applicants reserve the right to specifically address in the future the further patentability of the dependent claims not specifically addressed herein.

CONCLUSION

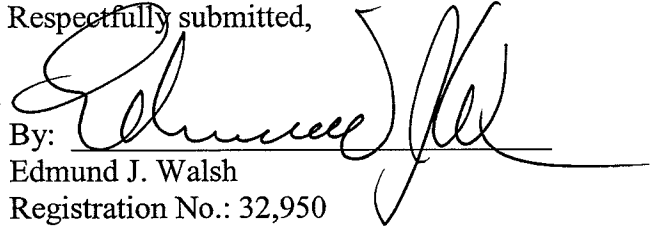
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' representative at the telephone number indicated below to discuss any outstanding issues relating to the allowability of the application.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed payment, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825 under Docket No. M1103.70436US00 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated:

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Respectfully submitted,



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